

The Cheerful Letter

EVERY PLACE A CHURCH; EVERY DAY THE LORD'S DAY; ALL EVENTS BLESSINGS; ALL JOY
THANKSGIVING; AND ALL NATURE AND LIFE FULL OF GOD.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

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No. 5

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OCTOBER.

September days were green and fair;
But sharp winds pierced the shining air,
That froze the dimples of the river
And made the wayside blossom shiver.

September's heart was winter-steeled.
The frost lay white upon the field
Day after day; the northern blast
Withered the bracken as it passed.

"The time of snow!" we said. Not yet!
Flushed with suffusions of regret,
Out of the south October came,
Setting the forest's heart aflame.

Summer returned with her, and still
She lingers with us: stream and hill
And wide fields waver like a dream
Through warm, soft mist and tender gleam.

Again the gentian dares unfold
Blue fringes closed against the cold;
Again, in mossy solitudes,
The glimmering aster lights the woods.

One mass of sunshine glows the beech;
Great oaks, in scarlet drapery, reach
Across the crimson blackberry vine
Toward purple ash and sombre pine.

The orange-tinted sassafras
With quaintest foliage strews the grass;
Witch-hazel shakes her gold curls out,
'Mid the red maple's flying rout.

Our forests that so lately stood
Like any green familiar wood
Aladdin's fabulous tale repeat,—
The trees drop jewels at our feet.

With every day some splendor strange,
With every hour some subtle change!
Of our plain world how could we guess
Such miracles of loveliness?

Ah, let the green Septembers go!
They promise more than they bestow;
But now the earth around us seems
Clad in the radiance of our dreams.

Emblem of joy to thee and me,
Dear friend, may this rare season be!
Life has not had its perfect test:
Our latest years may be our best.

Heaven's inmost warmth may wait us still.
What if, beyond time's autumn chill,
There bless us, ere we hence depart,
A glad October of the heart?

—*Lucy Larcom.*

THE RELIGION OF JESUS.

As the sacred books of every nation are alike in not attempting to prove the existence of God, universal thought takes it for granted that no man in his secret mind is an atheist. To insist that the revolving worlds are the result of laws which have no designer is an evidence, as Thomas Paine said, that the man who says so is only "half rational." Picking up a costly lace handkerchief, though we may not find a name on the corner, we know it has been manufactured and is owned by some one. Likewise, creation does not bear the name of the Maker; but a rational mind intuitively knows that it has been designed and

evolved, and shows the power and beneficence of the Being we name the Good One, or God.

Jesus does not refer to a special time to publicly worship. In his view, "The rolling year is full of God." Nor does he suggest any mountain, temple, or church as more sacred than another in which to draw near to God. Moses supposed that a certain bush was more holy than any other. The Jews insisted on the Jerusalem temple being more divine than that in Samaria; and, even in this enlightened day, many persons insist that their cathedral or conventicle is more sanctified than other people's churches. Jesus, however, shows that no structure is more sacred than another. And the only temple God specially considers divine is the human spirit when it lovingly obeys him.

Jesus teaches that God is Father; and he does not lead up to it through the doctrine of moral Governor, Judge, or King, but, as a first step to win men, introduces him as Father. He lifts us over every other idea to God as the Father, who, without upbraiding, forgives the penitent all manner of sin, and loves like a mother.

God is the good Shepherd, who leaves the angelic ninety-and-nine to seek the earthly lost sheep. All men are dear to him, as the silver pieces in the purse were dear to the Jewish wife; but the ten given on her wedding-day, and worn as a necklace, were specially dear. So, when we, through penitence, give ourselves to our Father, we are doubly dear to him; and, should one of us turn back into disobedient ways, we are called "lost," when, lighting a lamp, God seeks diligently till he finds us.

When conscious of depravity, a man feels unfit to pray; and to sing hymns which speak familiarly to God seems blasphemy. Many a dishonest person is too honest to go to church. Picturing a man in this state, Jesus shows the publican drawn to public worship, standing afar off, not looking up, smiting on his breast, and exclaiming in an uttered groan, "God be merciful to me, the sinner!" The gospel is meant to cheer such penitent men and women with a free and full forgiveness to-day; and the greatness of the pardon should constrain the restored child to "lose his right eye" rather than again grieve the Father who loves him with all his heart.

Jesus lays down the principle that, as God is the Father of us all,—some obeying him like the elder brother, others returning as the prodigal or publican, and a vast number supposing themselves orphans,—one's duty is to act as brother to others.

Brotherhood means Righteous and Unselfish Conduct to Others. I have suffered persecution through preaching this principle; but I repeat that, when a man replies that he cannot or will not do to his customers or servants as he would be done by, he ought to leave the Church, saying, "I refuse to be a follower of Jesus." The inconsistencies of leading Christians who make money by unfair competition and unbrotherly cutting down wages keep many a God-fearing person outside our churches. The man who supposes that his chief aim in life is to make money out of others dishonors God, curses the world, and loses his own soul.

Brotherhood means Social Justice to One Another. The common laborer is much better off than in old times, but he has not received a just share of the modern increase of wealth; and the burning question should be how justly to give him his due.

The Brotherhood should be International. It demands universal peace and arbitration instead of war. When an African, Asiatic, or European, wishes to come to this land, let him first obtain from our deputy in his country a certificate that he is wholesome, honest, and industrious before he is permitted to come over to us. Then let him be received as a brother. But, before he is intrusted with a vote in our affairs, we should demand seven years' residence.

Without any miraculous sign, I hereby preach the glad tidings that the invisible God is our Father, who loves us, forgives our sins, as the good man forgave his penitent prodigal son, and yearns to inspire us to be pure in thought before him, and unselfishly righteous as a brother to others. While preaching this religion of Jesus, I submit that it is true concerning God and the right conduct between man and man. With Darwin and our greatest scientists, you believe that, at the back of this visible universe, and moving the invisible laws which evolve and control it, there is an Almighty Mind. I now appeal to your intuitive power which perceives truth, and

ask, Is that invisible Mind our Father? and is every man we see our brother? My friends, is this truth to be believed and acted on? Then I call on you to be honest to your conviction, and take your stand with those Christian pioneers who by teaching and conduct illustrate it.

It is an error to suppose that our Father will be compelled to destroy the present race of mankind because it is impossible to evolve it into the human likeness of himself. Jesus does not teach that hopeless doctrine, and evidently looks for the triumph of truth and righteousness. Let us, therefore, hope in God, and also in man; and, as the religion of Jesus is gradually, sweetly, and faithfully obeyed by his followers, the whole world will be as surely, gradually, drawn to our Father and to one another. This soul-inspiring truth can only be preached in the pulpit; but in the home, social intercourse, and your business transactions it can be proved. You have testified that it is divine. Therefore, men and brethren, carry it out in your lives. Amen.—*William Birch, D.D.*

THE STILL HOUR.

O Father, give me wisdom, give me strength,—
Wisdom to see thy truth, the strength to do;
And grant, through these, thy fair serenity,
That stands when others deem my truth untrue.

Give me the sight that sees thy meaning clear
In flowers and clouds and faces on the street;
Give me the ears that hear thy harmonies,
Ringing above the tones that seem unsweet.

Grant me the heart to love thee through thy world,
To make my life a tender charity.
Give me the grace that has no thought of self,
And give the thought of self that honors thee.
—*Edith T. Ames.*

Never too poor, too ugly, too dull, too sick, too friendless, to be useful to some one.—*Kate Gannett Wells.*

Keep fast in the higher element, where the senses of God and his joy are lifting the mind into liberty, and the lower and more carnal impulses will be left behind and forgot.—*Bushnell.*

We must live more soundly in order to think more truly. From the heart of God we read the deep secret of his eternal purpose.—*Philip Moxom.*

While high thinking does not always prevent low living, it is also true that there can be no high and holy living without high and holy thinking.—*Rev. James McLeod.*

While a healthy body helps to make a healthy soul, the reverse is yet more true. Mind lifts up, purifies, sustains the body. Mental and moral activity keeps the body healthy, strong, and young, preserves from decay, and renews life.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

Like flakes of snow that fall unperceived upon the earth, the seemingly unperceived events of life succeed one another. As the snow gathers together, so are our habits formed. No single flake that is added to the pile produces a sensible change. No single action creates, however it may exhibit a man's character.—*Presbyterian.*

This truth comes to us more and more, the longer we live,—that on what field or in what uniform or with what aims we do our duty matters very little, or even what our duty is, great or small, splendid or obscure. Only to find our duty certainly and somewhere, somehow do it faithfully, makes us good, strong, happy, and useful men, and tunes our lives into some feeble echo of the life of God.—*Phillips Brooks.*

THE BOOK AND MAGAZINE CLUB.

[Send all offers and requests for this department to Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 2 Kensington Park, Roxbury, Mass.]

OFFERS.

Will any mother who would like to have "Gentle Measures in Training the Young," by Jacob Abbott, or any one who would like "Black Beauty," address Miss Langmaid, 373 Boylston Street, Boston, Mass.?

Miss Cora H. Clarke, 91 Mt. Vernon Street, Boston, Mass., offers "Romola," "The Mill on the Floss," "Jane Eyre," "Uncle Tom's Cabin," "Mademoiselle Ixe," "Stepping Heavenward," "In His Steps,"

"Donovan," "We Two," "A Knight Errant," "A Hardy Norseman" (the last four by Edna Lyall), "The Bonnie Brier Bush," "Cranford."

REQUESTS.

[Read directions at beginning of Book Club before writing.]

Those who send offers and requests for the Book Club will do us a kindness by noting the following suggestions: 1. Please write very clearly. 2. Do not use a pencil. 3. Do not use contractions, especially names of States (as Cal. and Col. for California, Colorado). 4. Write on one side only of the paper. 5. Do not forget to give your full address. (The State is now and then omitted.) 6. Do not send matter for the Book Club to Miss Clarke, but to Mrs. Nichols, the Book Club secretary.

Those who write to us for the first time must send the name and address of a minister as a reference. Without that the request will not be printed.

Mrs. Dora Taylor, Dale, Oklahoma Territory, would be glad to receive books and magazines.

Mrs. J. King, Centralia, Indian Territory, asks for the *Christian Herald* or any reading.

L. D. Gibbons, Punta Gorda, Florida, asks for Unitarian and other good literature.

Ira Hooks, Big Lick, North Carolina, will be glad to receive "House of Seven Gables."

Miss Ada Becton, Harlowe, North Carolina, asks for "Beautiful Joe" and any other books suitable for girls.

The address of Mrs. Sarah Gilbert is changed from Mt. Vernon, South Dakota, to 804 Locust Street, Atlantic, Iowa.

Dear Cheerful Letter,—You came last night as a pleasant guest, and also some papers and magazines. I was so glad to get them, especially *The Cheerful Letter*, as I can hardly ever get one, and would be pleased to get it regular; for I like the sermon extract and Mothers' Club. Will some of the *Cheerful Letter* friends please send good religious books or magazines to a friend of mine, Miss Lula Bartley, Meltons-ville, Marshall County, Alabama? She likes to read, but is not able to buy. I would

also like some religious novels. You will hear from me when I receive them, and will pass on reading to others. (Mrs.) Ada V. Wann, Glensaida, Alabama.

C. G. Cox, Gum Branch, North Carolina, asks for "To Have and to Hold," and also "Thelma."

Mrs. William F. Munt, Grand Rapids, Nebraska, living fifteen miles from town, asks for reading for the family, consisting of husband and three daughters, fifteen, twelve, and ten years respectively.

C. B. Frazelle, Swansboro, North Carolina, asks for *Ladies' Home Journal*, October, 1900, to April, 1901; also, good books for circulating library.

THE MOTHERS' CLUB.

Contributions to this department may be sent to Mrs. J. S. Howe, Chestnut Street, Brookline, Mass.

THE MOTHER AND HER BOYS.

The mother's one absorbing idea and desire, when a man-child is given her, is that he may grow up to be a good man, that the world may be a little better for his manhood. I do not think a mother can do much to help the boy to become a good, useful man unless she has this feeling from the beginning. Miss Edgeworth, in one of her stories, makes a mother say, "All boys are naturally little bears." While not able entirely to indorse this idea, I am free to confess there is some truth in it. But there is also another truth, beautifully put by Mrs. Barbauld, when she says, "Reverence in the infant the future man; in man, the rudiments of the angel." Reverence,—that is the thing we want. Love, in the mother, comes by nature; but this mere natural love, if unaccompanied by reverence and a thought for the future, is just as likely to lead her wrong as right. About the year 1492, in a little village in Germany, there was a schoolmaster, by name John Trebonius, who had a curious habit of always raising his cap to salute his pupils when he entered the school-room. When some one expressed astonishment, he said: "There are among these boys men of whom God will one day make burgomasters, chancellors, doctors, magistrates. Although you do not see them with the badges of their

dignity, it is right that we should treat them with respect." One of those little boys was a certain Martin Luther. I do not know that we could have a better illustration of the importance of our subject and the spirit in which it should be regarded. It is, at least in all the early part, especially a mother's subject. At the same time a complete man cannot be made without the help of the father. It takes both a good man and a good woman to train up a youth. I think that boys are often injured, sometimes almost ruined, by the mother absorbing too exclusively the confidence of her lads. More and more, as the lad grows up, he needs the influence and companionship of a good man. At the same time, in the earliest years, the chief influence does rest with the mother.

"We hardly know," says Dr. Martineau, "how soon the child once born in the image of God becomes twisted into our likeness and spoiled by the contagion of our selfishness." I think we may take as especially concerning the mother the period of life from infancy to the age of ten or twelve, when the boy is beginning to pass out into the wider influences of the world.

Passing on, then, to some of the main elements required in the building up of character, I must put first of all *self-control*. This seems to me the main line which will run all through the life. I feel it to be of such importance that I believe a child taught to exercise self-control, though not taught to read and write, will have a better chance of making a good man than one taught any quantity of learning without self-control. It is said of John Wesley's mother that she whipped him when a baby in order to teach him to cry softly. Mrs. Wesley was a wise woman. She rightly estimated the value of this habit of self-control, and thought she could not begin with it too soon, though I cannot quite agree with her plan, and think that, if a little more of the "patience of love" had tempered her firmness, John Wesley might have been even a better man than he was. But I would not let a child cry *ab libitum*, I would not let it eat *ab libitum*. The essential principle in teaching self-control is to begin with the mother's exercising quiet, firm control, and gradually relaxing it as reason and affection can be brought to bear upon

the child, and he can be induced to exercise the same control over himself. It is not by any set lessons so much as by the opportunities which keep occurring in the daily life of the family.

It is harder work to teach a boy who is alone with his mother than one growing up with brothers and sisters. It is a misfortune to be an only child; and I am inclined to think the advantages to the growth of character increase rather than diminish by the child being one of a large family.

In the teaching of self-control it is very essential that the mother shall have firm control over herself. She wants self-control in not giving way to her child. A mother's love is so great and so unselfish that, I am sure, if mothers could only be brought to feel the importance of restraining their own pleasure in the delight of their children, and would look further ahead, they would make many more sacrifices than they do. It is so hard to say "no"; it is so easy to say "yes," especially if we gain a little present relief, as well as the child a present pleasure. Restless caprice is almost one of the first trials of childhood and motherhood, too; but it opens the door for endless little lessons in self-control and order. Take an illustration from a little child playing: first, the child wants his blocks; plays with them only a few minutes, perhaps does not play with them at all, but, as soon as they are fairly out on the floor, wants something else. Now it is a ball, then nothing will satisfy him but a pencil and slate; and meanwhile all the other toys are left scattered about. The easiest plan for the mother at the moment is to let him go on in this way, and then put them away herself by and by. But the mother who looks to the future of her boy will not do so. Here is one of the opportunities of teaching self-control. But how? Not by merely telling the child he must keep to the blocks, and that he shall have nothing else, but by the mother herself trying to interest him in them, showing him, perhaps, some new thing to build, and in any case teaching him that they must be put orderly by, even though she has to assist him in doing this. All this, of course, takes trouble; but such moral lessons can no more be given without trouble than a writing or a reading lesson.

One element in self-control is letting

children feel the consequences of their acts. The older idea of rewards and punishments was arbitrary. Luther said, "The apple should be placed beside the rod." But nowadays we see that a wiser kind of retribution may constantly be brought out of the very right or wrong doing itself, without either apple or rod. For instance, a child will linger or dawdle over dressing, he is not ready for the drive or walk: let him stay at home. He refuses to have his hands and face washed for dinner: let him dine alone; he must not come to table. Weak parents, however, rather try to shield their children from consequences; but every time they do so they lose one of nature's opportunities. One thing especially may be spoken of here,—the way in which a thoughtful mother may see the points at which heredity has caused some natural weakness or over-development, and do her part in the evolution of something better. The doctrine of evolution is all right, as long as we bear in mind how much of it we have in our own power. The first great desire of the mother's heart,—that her boy should grow up a good man,—if only kept steadily before her, will help her very much; and she will not feel any thing too trifling or too small that shall be necessary from the very beginning to build up character.

Next to self-control I would place *Truthfulness and honesty*. At the outset I think it should be said that truthfulness is learned much later than people generally suppose. I used to think it was one of the first things to be taught; nay, that untruthfulness was a wickedness which no child properly taught by parents not believing in original sin would be guilty of. So, when my first child, soon after he had learned to talk, told me an untruth, I cried very bitterly. Truthfulness is one of the *first* lessons to be taught, only we must not expect too much. A great deal of what is too apt to be taken for untruthfulness in a child is mere play of imagination, a sort of idealizing and painting, which comes very early to some children. It is the duty and responsibility of *accuracy* which must be taught; and a great deal may be done in this way while the lad is a mere child. "Sir," said Dr. Johnson, "If your boy tells you that he looked out of that window when he looked out of the other, whip him!" We may differ with the

doctor, perhaps, as to the way of punishing the boy; but there is no doubt that inaccuracy should not be overlooked in a child. We are constantly seeing such shocking examples of untruthfulness and exaggeration, both in private gossip and in the newspapers, that one cannot help wondering whether, if the good doctor's plan had been put into practice all round, society might not be blessed with more truthful members. One cannot too soon teach a child to use its conscience in these matters. If the mother will only train her boy early in this matter of accuracy, the larger influences to truth and honesty will follow naturally enough. — *Mrs. Brooke Herford*.

(To be continued.)

NATURAL HISTORY.

A NEW ACQUAINTANCE.

Walking along a gravelly road in the country, we observed, near the grass, a number of little mounds of earth, which we supposed to be ants' nests. Stopping to examine the species, we were surprised to find no ants whatever. Watching and waiting to see if any came running home from the neighboring herbage, we noticed something crawling up one of the nests from below. Seeing our shadow, the insect retreated a little. Then, gaining courage, it came out a little further; and, behold! it was a bee,—a wild bee. She flew away. We were astonished at her audacity in entering the nest of an ant, which does not allow any intrusion upon her domain without an immediate demonstration of vigilance and defence. Directly another bee, with her legs covered with pollen, alighted upon the nest, and disappeared within the hole as if she were at home. So it went on. Bees entered and left the nest, and no ants appeared upon the scene. Finding the same thing going on at all the other nests, we concluded that the bees had a right to this camping-ground, and knew what they were about. And so it proved. Afterward, taking a trowel with us, we opened some of the nests, where we found larvæ, pupæ, pollen, and young bees.

The bee begins her house by excavating a perpendicular gallery, or shaft, two or three inches in depth, then a short side shaft, and at the end of it an oval cell about the size of

a white bean. Within the cell, which is lined with a smooth, hard paste, the bee stores a little ball of yellow pollen the size of a small pea. On the pollen, which is to be the food of the future grub, or larva, she lays an egg. Then the bee extends the perpendicular shaft two or three inches deeper into the earth, making another side shaft and another cell at the end of it, which she also furnishes with pollen, and lays another egg, this process goes on until the gallery is eight or ten inches deep, with several cells arranged at intervals on different sides of the gallery. It is not easy to open these nests without breaking the shaft, the sides of which are not cemented, but are rough and easily crumble to pieces. The cells, having a firm, hard lining, retain their form. It is quite exciting to find a cell containing a little golden ball of pollen, with a white, cylindrical, curved egg laid upon it, or a cell containing a whitish grub, with some pollen left which it has not eaten. The grub, when it has consumed the pollen, assumes a quiescent state or condition. It contracts in length, expands in breadth, and transforms into a pupa. In this condition one can see the forming legs, wings, antennæ, and other parts of the perfect insect. A single pupa occupies a cell, and fills it quite full. In a few days all its limbs and organs are fully developed, and it becomes an active bee. There are many species of wild bees. This one belongs to the genus *Andrena*. There are yellow stripes on the head, and the abdomen is banded with white. Within the space of six feet square the nests number thirty or forty. The bees are harmless, noiseless, intent upon their own work, and do not resent our incursions.

J. A.

AMUSEMENT COLUMN.

[All contributions to this column should be sent to Miss K. C. Porter, 22 Brimmer Street, Boston, Mass.]

I.

Numerical Enigmas.

After handing a mug of 9, 2, 3, to the man at the 7, 4, 5, of the 1, 6, 8, Frank resumed reading the life of 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9.

(St. Nicholas.)

My 1, 2, 3, 4, is undoubtedly possessed by every one of the whole race of 1, 2, 3, 4,

5, 6, 7, 8 (my whole), while my 5, 6, 7, 8, ends a prayer.

(St. Nicholas.)

II.

In these quotations find five girls' names without transposing any letters:—

"Of such as, wandering near her secret bower,
Molest her ancient solitary reign."

(Gray.)

"Where olive-leaves were twinkling in every
wind that blew,
There sat beneath the pleasant shade a
damsel of Peru."

(Bryant.)

"Slowly she raised her form of grace,
Her eyes no ray conceptive flung."

(Hogg.)

"Stainless worth,

Such as the sternest age of virtue saw."

(Bryant.)

(St. Nicholas.)

III.

An Old Maxim.

—igh— —are— —pea—, —rea—
—ue— —r— —um—.

(St. Nicholas.)

IV.

Easy Reversals.

1. Reverse a color and give a poet.
2. Reverse a musical pipe and give an animal.
3. Reverse an entrance and give a measure of surface.
4. Reverse an enclosure and give a vehicle.
5. Reverse part of a ship and give an edible plant.
6. Reverse a noose and give a small pond.
7. Reverse an apartment and give an upland.

(St. Nicholas.)

V.

Bird Puzzle.

One foggy day a well-known bird went out for a walk with her husband. An express train came along just as they were crossing the railroad, and, alas! she lost her tail, and he lost his head. Their remains being united (she first and he next) made another bird. What is this bird's name?

VI.

What am I?

I have feet, but no legs and toes. My feet are in constant use, yet I can neither

run nor walk; and I am neither quadruped nor biped, though I have been known to stand upright. I have hands, fingers, and nails, but no arms. Part of me is attached to nearly every dwelling-house, to a prison, or a church; and part of me—nay, my whole also in former times—too often beat a lad. Men might use me as an arm of offence for want of a stouter weapon; but my right place and use are in peaceful commerce.

Conundrums.

1. What is the difference between one yard and two yards?
2. What killed Joan of Arc?
3. Who were the shortest men spoken of in the Bible?
4. How do you make a Maltese cross?
5. What is it that we value more than life, fear more than death, the rich man wants it, the poor man has it, the miser spends it, the spendthrift keeps it, and, when we die, we take it with us?

Answers to Puzzles in September Number.

I.
A bed.

- II.
1. Ocean, canoe.
 2. Words, swords.
 3. Cork, rock.
 4. Huts, shut.
 5. Manor, Roman.
 6. Organ, groan.
 7. Printer, reprint.

- III.
1. Toothache. 2. Abyssinian. 3. Alleviate. 4. Obligation. 5. Initiation. 6. Opinion. 7. Cannonaded.

- IV.
1. Boston. 2. New York. 3. Rochester. 4. Washington. 5. Charleston. 6. Mobile. 7. St. Paul.

V.
Great Britain.

Conundrums.

1. Because they make people steel pens, and say they do write.
2. The eyelid, because it always has a pupil under the lash.
3. The one gives milk, the other gives way.

THE EDITOR'S CORNER.

THE NOVELS OF CHARLOTTE M. YONGE.

II.

In the May number of *Littell's Magazine* (1901) is an article by Miss Christabel Coleridge about Miss Yonge's novels. The first paragraphs are as follows:—

"Nearly fifty years ago 'The Heir of Redclyffe' made its appearance in two small red volumes, with no adventitious aid to popularity, few advertisements, and no puffs. It took the reading world by storm, and practically started, at least made widely known, a new kind of tale and a new kind of character. Few people of this day believe what a long procession of 'good heroes' have walked after Sir Guy Morville to the islands of the Blest; how young enthusiasts, like William Morris and Dante Gabriel Rossetti, took him for a guide in life, how scholarly gentlemen wept over his early death, and sorrowful women, left widows like the heroine, wrote grateful letters of thanks for the help and comfort given them by 'Amy's' story.

"It is not too much to say that the book made religion seem the very romance of life to young people, and that in quite a new way it made the interest of a novel turn, not on plot, not merely on the depiction of character, but on the struggles of young souls to attain goodness. It was, although the author would not have so expressed it herself, intended truly for 'The Story of a Penitent Soul.' It spoke the language, not only of its own day, but of a certain phase of thought of its own day; and, while this limitation made it strike more home at the time, it has perhaps tended to let it slip out of fashion in a day the thoughts of which are so different. But it has done its work."

If the "Heir of Redclyffe" had come out recently, we should have an additional reason to weep over "Guy's" death. A "trained nurse" would probably have saved his life. It makes one shudder to think of a patient in low typhoid fever being allowed to hold long conversations on business, write a will, and, finally, have a communion service held in his room, just when the one important thing was to save his strength, and when we had already been informed that the great danger for him was that he could not rally

from extreme weakness. A nurse of to-day sometimes is forbidden even to change her dress, lest a new pattern may fatigue the mind of a feeble patient. And as to letting business conversations and religious services go on in a sick-room, that is as obsolete as bleeding for hemorrhage. How a reader longs to get into a book where the characters betray such gross ignorance of the essentials of any subject, and straighten them out!

Miss Yonge succeeds in making her characters so real that we regard them as human beings, and thus criticise their behavior, mistakes, and faults as we do those of our living acquaintances. In reading her books for the first time, as young girls, we acquiesce in her judgment of her own characters. But, later in life, we understand their foibles better. A recent perusal of the "Heir of Redclyffe" in mature years makes us better understand what caused the greatest trouble in the book.

Philip, the cousin, whose jealousy of Guy's wealth and worldly position is one of the factors of the situation, is attached to his cousin, Laura Edmonstone. The parents of Laura have allowed them to form the closest intimacy, and to live in constant communication with each other. The natural result follows. The young people inadvertently discover each other's feelings. Laura at this time is only eighteen years old. But, so absolutely sure are they that Philip's poverty will be an insuperable objection in the eyes of the parents of Laura that they do not declare their attachment. They are right in their assumption; for, when after three years the truth is discovered, even the gentle, kind-hearted motherly Mrs. Edmonstone has nothing to say except, "They cannot marry." Really, poor Mr. Edmonstone, who is represented as the most feeble and scatter-witted of men, here has more sense than any of the others. He says, "Mamma would always allow Philip to be with the girls; and how could a poor fellow be expected not to fall in love?"

There is another rare gift possessed by Miss Yonge,—that of making not only her heroines, but her heroes interesting. It is curious how few novelists can do this. I remember once trying to count the interesting heroes whom I could recall,—Miss Yonge's being eliminated,—and I could

think of but five; and, of these, two were from Thackeray,—Henry Esmond and Major Dobbin. Interesting heroines abound both in men's novels and in women's,—not great and heroic heroines, but living, breathing, bright, attractive girls. But consider the heroes. Scott's are mere pegs, so are Trollope's, so are George Eliot's (I speak now of the hero *par excellence*, the one on whom is devolved the rôle of hero by the author). Take at random almost any author. Take the story of "Archie Lovell," for instance. Archie is a warm-hearted, faulty, scatter-witted girl. We feel like scolding her, but we cannot help loving her. But what a nonentity is Gerald! And the man Archie finally marries is the dimmest of shadows. Miss Austen's young men are good, but uninteresting. Frank Churchill is the least tiresome, but he is shallow. Emma, Fanny Price, Jane Fairfax, Marianne Dashwood, are all nice girls whom we should enjoy meeting. But how we should long for the departure of their respective admirers if they came in to call! Rhoda Broughton's young men are not much better than Scott's, except where she draws such a character as Freddy Ducane as a warning. Each one is the average young man of the present day, no difference or distinction. Dickens's heroes have less character still: any one might be any other one if the name were changed. It is no small praise to say that Miss Yonge has done what so many other writers have found impossible. Her young men are real, and there seems some excuse for the heroines caring for them.

Guy Morville, as we have remarked, is somewhat idealized. But how real are Humphrey Charlecote, Norman and Harry May, Leonard Ward, Berenger, Louis Fitzjocelyn, the Brownlow brothers, the Underwoods, the Mohuns, and the Merrifields! Arthur Martindale is a perfect reproduction of the average selfish, spoiled type of young man. The only excuse for Violet's caring for him is that she is so young,—a mere child. No one can like Arthur, but we have met him over and over again.

In a future number we may have something to say about Miss Yonge's books for children. With few exceptions, they are the best children's books that have been written; yet there are some flaws even in them.

THE BEARS OF BERNE.

I remember before I went that everybody said to me, "When you go to Berne, of course you will see the bears." But I never dreamed I was to see so many,—a whole townful of them. I could not turn a corner, indeed, without running across them, nor go into a store without being asked to buy one or two.

The live bears were at one end of town, to be sure, shut up in a pit. We had to go over a bridge and up a stony street to find them; but, before we reached there, there had been bears enough of every other kind. There were stone bears and wooden bears, bears on all the silver spoons and on all the playthings of the children, bears on spools of thread and on scissors and nut-crackers. There were bears, too, standing guard by the doorways, and bears on the flags that floated overhead. Why, even the fountains, those delightful stone fountains in the middle of the street, where all the people came to drink and fill their pitchers,—even the fountains have bears in carved procession running around them. And as for the clock,—the old clock on the big tower,—when that strikes twelve, there are ever and ever so many other bears that appear on a platform high above the street, and have a small circus all to themselves. All the town then turns out to see them.

Fifteen minutes before noon the open paved court begins to fill. Carriages drive up and get into line,—carriages with tourists in them, clergymen, school-teachers, mammas and papas with pretty foreign children. Soldiers come out from the barracks near by. Shop-keepers leave their trading, and stand in the doorways. The milk-carriers from the mountains, with their queer wooden wagons and pails scrubbed so clean and white,—the milk-carriers stop on the corners, their big dogs, who have dragged these carts about since dark, taking this time for a nap under the wheels. Everybody out on some errand with basket or bundle stops, too. Nobody wants to miss the great spectacle,—the spectacle of the bears and the cock and the funny old man performing their wonderful feats without a mistake or a tumble.

First of all, the wooden cock, just three minutes before noon, appears high up on

the tower, flapping his wings and crowing. Then a door opens, and the parade of the bears begins. They file past a little old man with a big beard, who is sitting silent above them. A harlequin strikes a bell to announce the hour; the cock answers him to say the time is correct, I suppose,—cocks are always authorities on time. The little old man with a big beard then picks up his hour-glass, and counts the strokes of the bell by opening his mouth and raising his sceptre. And the bear, who has kept his eye on the old man all this time, nods his own head gravely whenever the lips of the other move, as if to assure the people below there has been no mistake in the counting. He has looked well after their interests. Then another man, a tremendous fellow, on the very tiptop of the tower, raising his hammer, brings it down with a great loud bang on a big brass bell,—a bang that can be heard in every part of Berne, and is meant to announce to all the town that he, too, has been on the alert, that it is now twelve o'clock, and all's well. Then the cock below, quite satisfied with everything and everybody, as cocks that strut about doing nothing are apt to be, gives another little crow, and disappears. Then all the people in the street, well content with the performance, and all the happier for their rest and fun, go off again. The carriages with the tourists drive away; the dogs get up and shake themselves, rattling the wooden wagons over the stones; the shop-keepers begin to look out for bargains; the soldiers go back to their barracks; and the bears above in their clock tower settle themselves at something—I could not see what it was—till the time for another appearance begins.

In a different part of the town, as I said, are the live bears of Berne,—those you see in the pictures. They spend their days in a deep stone pit, divided by a wall, each side having a bath in it for the bears to bathe in or drink out of, as they choose. Bears are not so fastidious as we. About the stone railing running around the top of the pit were more people, and always are, than I could possibly count, all of them pressing close to the railing, so that I could hardly find a place among them for myself and the little girl with me. I am sure there were two hundred soldiers there in red; and there

were many mammas, their babies sitting on the stone parapet before them; and there were little children in their fathers' arms. And all these people had come to see the bears, feeding them now and then with bread or carrots or cake. They do this every day of their lives.

There was an old woman, not twenty feet away, who sold bread and vegetables; and the bears knew just how to make the people buy nearly every loaf and green she had. They would lie flat on their backs, pounding their breasts with their paws as they cried in loud tones, but with eyes glancing in every direction to see who would throw them a bite. The soldiers, seeing them, would break into loud shouts, and the children would laugh with delight; and off would go somebody to buy more cakes or carrots. Then up would jump the bears, and with their paws on the walls of their pits open their big red mouths for more. They scrambled and pushed each other for every bit that was thrown them. One would sometimes go off by himself, looking so pathetic and whining so loudly that every bit of bread or carrot, for a minute at least, would be thrown to him, till the other bears, seeing his good fortune, would rush his way.

And why are the bears so important in Berne? That is a long story, and belongs to history. Many hundreds of years ago a proud noble, wanting to build himself a city, happening one day to kill a bear in the forest, chose afterward to build this city on the very place where the bear had fallen. So that is why Berne, this quaint and beautiful old town of Switzerland, with its fascinating arcades over the streets, its fountains and hills, its cathedral and great walls, was founded high above the tumbling, rushing river of Aar, just where the brilliant snow-capped peak of the Jungfrau looks down forever on it. And since that day the bears of Berne have been famous in legend and song, have been pictured everywhere,—on the city's flags, its coats-of-arms and monuments. Every child is taught to love these creatures, and every old man and woman knows famous tales about them. Perhaps all the people think they are really the good fairies of Berne. Some animals might be, you know.—*Harper's Young People.*

LETTER FROM FORT SILL.

The following letter was received too late for insertion in the Book Club:—

FORT SILL, OKLAHOMA.

Through your influence I have received, through the last several years, a large quantity of reading matter for distribution among the soldiers. I am deeply grateful for the help that has come to me in this way; but I write now to say that, because of ill-health, I have just been placed upon the army retired list, and will, therefore, no longer be in position to make use of reading matter as heretofore, and to ask you to make this fact known to the readers of *The Cheerful Letter*.

Yours sincerely,

B. C. HAMMOND,

Chaplain U. S. Army.

The editor has written to Mr. Hammond to ask the name of his successor at Fort Sill.

A REFORMED DOG.

A saloon-keeper in Auburn, N.Y., owns a handsome jet-black dog, who has done duty since puppyhood as watchman of his premises on State Street. One hot summer day, when water could not be obtained about the saloon, the dog drank from a pan which stood under the beer faucet to catch the drippings. Unhappily for him, he liked it, and from that time substituted beer as his beverage for the water to which he was accustomed. He grew sleepy, morose, and uncertain in his temper. Several plans were tried to wean the dog from his bad habits, which spoiled him for his business of watching at night, but without success. In one way or other the dog managed to get beer, and his case was considered hopeless. A new dog was bought and employed at night in the saloon with the inebriate. What passed in the latter's canine mind cannot be known, but he showed that he was jealous of the new-comer, and drove him away. A day or two passed, and, to the surprise of all who knew him, the dog was seen drinking water; and a pan of beer being purposely left in his way, he avoided it. He redoubled his vigilance in his duties, and for six months has adhered strictly to total abstinence.—*Christian Register.*

THE CHEERFUL LETTER
EXCHANGE.

OBJECTS.

1. To cheer and comfort the lonely and discouraged—not only invalids, but all who need cheer and comfort—by the interchange of letters and by gifts of books and periodicals.

2. To supply in some measure to young people in remote places the lack of schools, by gifts of school-books, letters, and, for those who desire it, correspondence classes on history, the natural sciences, and other interesting branches of study. If any desire to join such classes, they may send their names to our secretary.

3. Also to supply, to some extent, the lack of a church. One good sermon or sermon extract is printed in each number of the paper. These sermons are never doctrinal, but practical, and intended to cheer and comfort the sorrowful and aid in giving a vital religion without regard to sect or creed.

4. An important part of our mission is to mothers of young families, who feel the importance of their sacred charge and are anxious to learn all that can be known to make of their children good, upright, useful men and women,—good citizens of the country,—for which we must all work together if we would make it fulfil its mission among the nations of the world and to the races of mankind. We give books on subjects connected with the training of children, and our columns are open (in our "Mothers' Council") to all who have questions to ask or interesting suggestions to make on topics important to mothers.

CHANGES OF ADDRESS.

Mrs. Rebecca Reedy, Olympia, Wash., to Tulare, California.

Mrs. Cornelia J. Davis, Elliott, Ohio, to Rousseau, Ohio.

Mrs. W. F. Aldrich, Waynesville, Virginia, to Mentor, Lake County, Ohio.

Mrs. E. M. Burdge, Home City, Ohio, to Box 14, Delhi, Ohio.

Mrs. M. D. Anderson, Ephesus, North Carolina, is now Mrs. Mary Booch, Gold Hill, North Carolina.

Mrs. Anna L. Wilkie, from 2025 Van

Buren Street, Topeka, Kansas, to R. F. D. No. 5.

IMPORTANT NOTICES.

The address of our treasurer for the summer months is Miss Louise Howe, Little Nahant, Nahant, Mass.

There will be a meeting of the Cheerful Letter Exchange on Friday, November 1, at 25 Beacon Street, 10.30 A.M. All interested in this work, whether members or not, are cordially invited.

The editor thanks cordially the friend who sent her the numbers of *The Cheerful Letter*. She would be very glad to receive one or two more copies of November, 1895 and 1896. Address directly Miss L. Freeman Clarke, Magnolia, Mass.

It is contrary to the rules of the Cheerful Letter Exchange to allow any one to make use of our paper by addressing letters, asking for money, clothing, or other articles, to those whose names are printed in the paper. This prohibition includes requests to borrow money and the offering of articles for sale. The name of any person who infringes this rule will be dropped from our list; and any one who receives a request of this description is desired by our Executive Committee to return no answer, but to enclose the letter at once to our secretary, Miss Langmaid.

DIRECTIONS.

EDITOR,—Miss L. Freeman Clarke, 91 Mt. Vernon Street, Boston, Mass.

SECRETARY OF CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE,—Miss Bertha Langmaid, 373 Boylston Street, Boston, Mass.

SECRETARY OF BOOK CLUB OF CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE,—Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 2 Kensington Park, Roxbury, Mass.

TREASURER OF CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE,—Miss Louise Howe, Little Nahant, Nahant, Mass., or 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.

Subscriptions and renewals should be sent to the treasurer, also all changes of address and requests for discontinuance. The subscription is fifty cents a year. If subscribers do not receive the paper regularly, they are requested to notify Miss Howe at once.

Those not able to subscribe for the paper, but desiring to receive it, may do so by writing to Miss Louise Howe, as above. Please give full name and address. Also send name of minister as reference. Some of our members take the paper in order to send it to those who are not able to subscribe for it.